Procurement of foodgrains in North Eastern Region

2626. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the procurement of paddy, rice and wheat in NER during the last three years, year-wise.

(b) whether Government have formulated any scheme for giving incentives to the farmers for producing above foodgrains in the region; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) There was no procurement of paddy, rice and wheat under the Price Support Scheme in NER States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura in the last three years.

(b) and (c) Each season, the minimum support prices for major agricultural commodities including paddy and wheat are fixed, applicable for the country as a whole including North Eastern Region. Since these are deficit States in terms of agricultural production, the market prices normally rule above the Minimum Support Price. However, in order to make the concept of Minimum Support Price a reality to all farmers everywhere in the country, the Government of India is encouraging States to take up decentralized procurement scheme. So far, in the North East, only the State Government of Assam has indicated its willingness to undertake decentralized procurement of paddy/rice.

Grain banks in Orissa

2627. SHRI MAN MOHAN SAMAL : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have sanctioned Rs. 22 crores to open 100 Grain banks in the first phase in the tribal districts of Orissa;

(b) if so, the number and location where the grain banks have been opened so far;

(c) the number of grain banks to be opened in Orissa by the year 2001-2002 with details of locations, district-wise, in the State; and

(d) the various grains to be deposited in those banks with capacity thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) to (d) No, Sir. Government has not released Rs. 22.00 crores to Government of Orissa to open 100 Grain Banks in the tribal districts in the first phase.

During 2001-02 an amount of Rs. 100.00 lakhs has been released to Government of Orissa for setting up 197 Grain Banks. The tribal mondals/blocks/ villages identified by the Central Planning Committee are only indicative and the States can set up Grain Banks as per their need. The type of foodgrains are the type normally consumed locally by the States. The details of target, number of Grain Banks established and funds released since 1996-97 (inception of the scheme) to Orissa are as follows :—

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	No. of Grain Banks to be established	Amount released	No. of Grains Banks established
1996-97	32	20.48	32
1997-98	35	22.40	35
1998-99	—	—	—
1999-2000	197	100.00	117
2000-2001	281	184.96	—
2001-2002	197	100.00	--
TOTAL :	742	427.87	184

Increase in food subsidy bill

2628. MISS MABEL REBELLO : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that food subsidy bill which was Rs. 19.91 crores in 1948-49 has increased to Rs. 8100 crore in the current year's budget;

(b) if so, whether Government are making any attempt to reduce the subsidy without hurting interests of the poor consumers; and